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New fishing platforms below Kentucky Lake Dam nearing completion

In the 1990's, Fisheries Division staff **Ted Crowell** (retired Assistant Director), **Bill McLemore** (retired Western Fisheries District Biologist) and **Paul Rister** (current Western Fisheries District Program Coordinator) were asked by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to participate in the planning for the proposed short-term closure of the Kentucky Dam tailwaters to recreational bank fishing.

The closure was anticipated to occur as the result of the construction of two new bridges across the tailwater area. The new bridges would take the existing P & L Railroad and U.S. 62/641 off of the actual dam in order to allow for the expansion of the existing barge locks. Although closure to boat traffic is minimal, the closure to bank fishing along the eastern and western shorelines in the tailwater area is more significant.

During the planning meetings several options for mitigation were discussed with Department staff to help offset the losses to recreational fishing and boating. Public meetings were also held to gather input from the public on the closures and proposed mitigation options. Early on in the project, two rock fishing jetties (what have become commonly referred to as "Rister Jetties") were constructed near the boat ramp to help offset for the west shoreline



New ADA accessible fishing piers are nearing completion below Kentucky Lake Dam as part of mitigation for the closure of bank fishing during construction of the new, expanded lock. KDFWR staff (Ted Crowell, Bill McLemore, and Paul Rister) were instrumental in getting these structures built in order to accommodate anglers in what is arguably the best tailwater fishery in Kentucky. *Neal Jackson photo*

bank fishing closure.

Other mitigation options included the construction of two fishing piers in the immediate tailwater area. Presently, these two piers are nearing completion and should be open soon to the public.

The east shoreline fishing pier (Pow-

erhouse Island) gradually slopes downward to an elevation of 318' at the terminal end. The pier is located in the area of powerhouse discharges and is subject to high velocities. This makes it an ideal location

[See "Platforms," page 2](#)

INSIDE:



3 Schaaf Award



7 Forest update



15 Nolin fish habitat

WE GET MAIL

Letters to the Commissioner's Office

Major James W. Thompson sent the following email, "I am currently deployed to Afghanistan, but looking forward to returning to Kentucky and doing some fishing later this year.

I was browsing for information on your website and found the 2012 fishing forecast. That is EXCELLENT work, and a great resource. Please pass on my thanks to whoever did the research and compilation.

Thanks for all you do as a Department."

The following note came from Johnny Vaughn to **Naomi Wilson** in our Wildlife Division. "I just wanted to thank you (Naomi) and brag on you a little. I am the old guy with limited computer skills that you helped get into the pheasant hunt drawing. I paid for myself and 2 friends. They had paid their own fee online. You promptly got me reimbursed for my \$50 overpayment.

In a time that appears that every business or service, social security, etc., etc. that I have dealt with in the past couple of years, no one seems to know anything, or has any concern to provide any service, answer any questions or anything.

It gives me hope that there are a few efficient people still in the workforce after dealing with you.

If I still had my business, I would try



to hire you. Just wanted you to know you are appreciated by me, and I am sure, by your employer."

Robert J. Wesolowski sent the following comments through our website. "Just a note to let you know that your stocking program at A.J. Jolly for Blue Catfish is turning out to be a great success. I remember it being mentioned on one of the call in shows for fishing on Kentucky Afield a couple of years back.

Last year I caught several nice (2-5 pounders) blues but yesterday (Feb 22, 2012) was the kicker. I caught a 36 pound behemoth at A.J. I still have not caught one of the flathead cats just introduced but with the large bluegill population there, it should be a matter of time before the flatheads reach behemoth size.

Also, I was just reading the fishing forecast and noticed that the stocking of blue cats in Bullock Pen is for research purposes and would like to let you know

that I caught a couple of nice blues there last year, one about 2 pounds and the other about 3 pounds, so they are doing OK there. I am attaching a photo of the 36 pounder that I caught yesterday.

The following email was received from Ms. Melissa Holt. "My son, Keith, was able to schedule a ride-a-long with **Officer Greg Hill**,

and he thoroughly enjoyed it! Officer Hill was extremely knowledgeable and very kind to Keith, and our family. We are very appreciative of your department allowing Keith this opportunity to learn about what his future job could be. I believe that Keith was inspired by Officer Hill, and that he will continue on this path. He was even more excited about his decision to become a Conservation Officer after he got home from the ride-a-long with Officer Hill. How wonderful! Thank you and your department so much!"

The Commissioner's office received a call from Mr. John Said who wanted to brag a bit on one of our Law Enforcement officers. He stated that **Officer Chris Fossitt** is an outstanding officer who has helped with a lot of issues recently even after receiving personal loss and devastation from the tornado. He just wanted to let us know how much he appreciates Officer Fossitt.

"Platforms," continued

for striped bass fishing.

The west bank fishing pier is located beneath the relocated highway bridge. In this area anglers could target catfish, large-mouth bass and white bass. The terminal end of this pier is designed at an elevation

of 310'. The lower level of the west bank fishing pier was selected to allow improved fishing at lower river levels. However, since this pier is lower, it would be under water more often (110 days/year) than the east bank fishing pier (62 days/year) based on historical river elevations.

Both fishing piers and the fishing

jetties near the Kentucky Dam Tailwater boat ramp are compliant with the American's With Disabilities Act (ADA). On behalf of the Fisheries Division, we would like to thank Bill McLemore and Paul Rister for their efforts to help improve recreational bank fishing access in one of the state's premiere fisheries.

Bonney receives Schaaf Award

The Wildlife Division would like to congratulate **Steve Bonney** for being awarded the Lauren Schaaf Award by the Kentucky State Chapter of The Wildlife Society.

Throughout his life and career with the department, Steve has made a commitment to wildlife conservation. During his tenure, Steve has not only proven to be an outstanding regional coordinator, but also a fundamental component of multiple wildlife-related projects.

Steve is an avid outdoorsman who grew up hunting, hiking and exploring the woods of Connecticut and Maine. He received his bachelor's degree from the Uni-

versity of Connecticut and attended graduate school at the University of Kentucky.

While at UK he worked as a wildlife research assistant. He joined the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources as a seasonal technician. As a seasonal, he devoted a lot of time to grouse trapping in Eastern Kentucky. During this period, seasonal employees were also commissioned, so once the grouse trapping day ended they would help Law Enforcement at night.

His first full time position was as a District Biologist. During his tenure as a

See “Bonney,” page 4



Tom Edwards presents Steve Bonney (right) with the Lauren Schaaf Award at the Kentucky State Chapter of The Wildlife Society meeting in February.



Paul Wilkes hoists up a large flathead catfish collected during sampling at A.J. Jolly Lake in Campbell County. Paul was recently hired as a Fish and Wildlife Technician III in the Special Investigations Research Branch.

Dane Balsman photo

New Fisheries employee

The Fisheries Division is pleased to announce that **Paul Wilkes** was recently hired as a Fish and Wildlife Technician III in the Special Investigations Research Branch. Paul is a Missouri native but his family moved to Kentucky when he was in high school.

Paul earned his B.S. degree from the University of the Cumberlands in 2007 with a major in Biological Sciences and a minor in Mathematics. In the spring of 2011, he completed his M.S. degree in Natural Resources from the University of Georgia (UGA). Paul's Master's Thesis focused around researching the thermal tolerances of lake sturgeon in warm, southern rivers.

Paul was previously employed with the Department during 2011 as a seasonal Fisheries Biologist II working on the surveying and permitting of private access structures on Department-owned lakes. Prior to working with the Department, Paul was an employee of the famous Georgia Aquarium where he was a Life Support Systems Technician. He was part

of a team that was responsible for maintaining water quality and filters systems for more than eight million gallons of saltwater exhibits. Paul also helped develop a hyperbaric chamber for use in dealing with decompression related illnesses for a variety of marine species exhibits.

Dave Dreves (Special Investigations Research Program Coordinator) is excited to have Paul as part of his research unit. "We have plenty of research projects on the books right now, with several projects nearing completion. We also have several new research projects beginning over the next few years. Additionally, we have five research projects that are currently ongoing," explains Dreves. "I anticipate that Paul's educational background will allow him to assist me greatly in the office, as well as in the field."

Paul and his wife, Heather, currently reside in Frankfort and are anxiously awaiting the birth of their first child (son) in May. Paul is a member of the Buck Run Baptist Church and enjoys fishing, hiking, and Frisbee golf in his spare time.

HVAC renovations in the Arnold Mitchell Building, Headquarters

Thanks for all your patience at the Arnold Mitchell Building over the past few months. We have completed our construction project that consisted of major upgrades to our HVAC system, installing energy efficient lighting, and installing new ceiling tiles.

Along with a more comfortable building we expect significant energy savings in the future. We want to especially thank **Lee Kemper** for all of his hard work on the project.

Lee was responsible for managing multiple contractors, consultants, and



Lee McClellan photo

project managers to insure the project was completed on time, within budget, and with minimal disruptions. This was a very

difficult task considering we implemented the project while keeping the building operational.

“Bonney,” continued

district biologist, Steve played a key role in building a co-op with KDFWR and the US Forest Service. In 1998 Steve became Northeast Regional Coordinator. He still holds that position today, and is the last remaining un-retired regional coordinator.

As the Northeast Regional Coordinator, Steve has furthered the relationship with the Forest Service, creating the mobility-impaired deer hunts at Twin Knobs and Zilpo campgrounds. He helped to create the mentor waterfowl hunt at Minor Clark Hatchery and assists fisheries when needed.

Steve has been a pioneer in forest management for KDFWR. In the northeast region, he hired one of the first wildlife biologist/foresters to implement forest management plans and harvests. This position has not only been a tremendous asset to the region but statewide.

Steve has made it a priority to secure public land for sportsmen, either through

land acquisition or various organizational partnerships. Understanding that recruiting future generations of sportsmen and women begins with securing land for those activities.

During his tenure with the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, Steve has been part of numerous projects and committees. He was part of reintroducing deer and turkey into the Northeast region and many other areas. He conducted hair snares and gathered biological data from bear trapping in Eastern Kentucky. He served on the deer and bear committees that make recommendations for regulations pertaining to those species.

Steve was also among the first to begin wood duck trapping in eastern Kentucky. Steve received the Mississippi Flyway Council award for his dedication and commitment to waterfowl and waterfowl management in Eastern Kentucky. Not only has he been committed to game species but has a real passion for non-

game species.

He continues to hold herpetology weekends at Natural Bridge State Park annually for children and their parents to look for and learn about amphibians and reptiles. He has been instrumental in finding listed or rare mussel species in the Licking River and other rivers in the region and state.

Steve continues to make his region and the agency better through his service, commitment and professionalism. He is still trudging through the muck and mud conducting his yearly surveys, monitoring bat caves, woodcock surveys, forest bird surveys, grouse surveys and many others. He talks as if he is a short timer, although we are doing our best to convince him otherwise.

Either way he continues to display his passion for conservation, hunting and the outdoors. The Wildlife Division and the KDFWR are proud of his many accomplishments and applaud him for his commitment to the wildlife resources and the sportsmen and women of Kentucky.

Move the cape. Your lifejacket's got your AWARD WINNING back

Kentucky's pro-lifejacket radio campaign from last summer captures two prestigious awards. An ADDY award from the American Advertising Federation and 1st Place at the 2012 International Boating and Water Safety Summit in San Diego.

The catch phrase, "Your lifejacket's got your back!" supplemented by, "and the backing of the best swimmers everywhere" sends a clear message to lifejacket ignorers from the world's elite swimmers including an Olympic Gold Medalist, a Navy Search and Rescue Swimmer and a Navy SEAL.

Often, boaters snub their noses at lifejackets believing they're good swimmers. Think again, Superman. When you're hurt,



Charlie Baglan (left) and Zac Campbell, Kentucky Boating Education Coordinator, at the American Advertising Federation banquet, Lexington Hilton Feb. 25, 2012

choking or dazed, nobody's good, not even the best. This collection of 30-second announcements aims to correct that "it'll never happen to me, so stay out of my face" attitude.

"It turned heads!" says **Captain Mike Fields**, just returning from the boating summit. "Unlike other sports, swimming has few super heroes. What **Charlie Baglan** (Div. of I&E) did in writing and producing this series was seek persons

known not for their name, but for positions and achievements set aside for only the best. As a result, this is the finest assemblage of spokespersons the industry has seen yet for boating safety."

"It's truly an honor to be recognized by a professional association such as these," comments **Scott Moore** who heads the broadcast branch. "Many state offices hire outside agencies to produce their promotional spots. We do it from within. I'm proud of this accomplishment and its extra special to know that Fish & Wildlife won while competing against private sector production facilities."

fw.ky.gov/boatingsafety.asp

Lt. Adkins graduates from DOCJT's CJED program

Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Division of Law Enforcement's **Lt. Richard Adkins** was among law enforcement executives from 17 agencies across Kentucky who graduated this month from the Criminal Justice Executive Development program, an advanced leadership course designed for supervisors at the state's small- and medium-size agencies.

Guest speaker Van Ingram, executive director for the Kentucky Office of Drug Control Policy, told the graduates that having good policies and procedures was not enough to run a good department, but agencies and communities also need strong leaders.



"Leadership is not something you put on in the morning with the uniform and take off at the end of the day," said Ingram, who is also a former police chief and graduate of the first CJED class. "Leadership should pervade your entire life as a part of who you are."

The 20 graduates comprised the Department of Criminal Justice Training's 14th CJED class. Covington Police Department Lt. James Donaldson was the class leader.

CJED is a five-week program that focuses on identifying, analyzing and solving problems as well as leadership, personnel administration, operations, fiscal management, executive and environmental relationships.

The purpose of the course is to provide students with the academic background, leadership skills and management techniques required for the future. Each session enhances leadership abilities and encourages the development of visionary thinkers.

To take part in CJED, potential students must be supervisors who rank sergeant or above. They must apply for entrance into the program and be selected by a committee of CJED graduates from across the commonwealth.

Students attend CJED courses for one week each month for five months.

Mitchell presents cooking wild game program for Spencer County outreach



Kathryn Goodlett photos

Bill Mitchell, Taylorsville Lake WMA Foreman, recently presented "Properly Caring for and Cooking Wild Game Meats" to the Spencer County Library for their Community outreach program.

The 27 participants attending were given the opportunity to taste test three types of wild game that Bill prepared

for them – grilled deer, wild turkey, and buffalo kabobs. And no, none of it was road kill!

During the presentation Bill discussed proper field care, and other factors affecting the taste and tenderness of a variety of wild game along with cooking techniques to enhance this.

He provided attendees with information on the WMA and KDFWR in general. Each attendee was given a packet of recipes from a booklet put together by current and former KDFWR employees.

Bill was assisted by his interim technician **Doug Goodlett**. Fun, food, and information was enjoyed by all.

Commission members visit elk holding facility

Fish and Wildlife Commission Chairman **Steve Glenn** and Fifth District Commission Member **Dr. James Rich** joined Deputy Commissioner **Benjy Kinman** in visiting the Bell County elk holding facility on February 22.

They met Wildlife Biologist **Will Bowling** there and toured the elk holding facility at the Syn-ergy Coal Complex.

Major modifications and enhancements have been made since the Missouri Department of Conservation constructed the facility in 2011. Missouri has paid all capital



expenses for this facility, and our personnel have been instrumental in suggesting most of the modifications.

All elk destined for interstate transfer are in captivity and segregated in three adjacent pens.

Will took the group to an active trap site on the same mine area. Future elk that are trapped will be relocated to other areas in the elk zone where the overall density is low.

Will's superior knowledge of this intense operation made their visit an extremely worthwhile trip. All

have a better appreciation for all the hard work staff has exhibited with elk trapping and relocation. Thanks again Will!

KDFWR Forest Habitat Management Update



Biologist Scott Freidhof collects forest inventory data on the Clay WMA in Nicholas County. Inventory data improves the likelihood of successful forest management projects.



Above: Cedar harvests on the Clay WMA will create young forest habitat and enhance growing conditions for young oaks in the understory.

By Steve Bonney

Forest habitat management efforts by the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources continue to gain momentum throughout Kentucky. A few examples from the Northeast Region are spotlighted here to illustrate a few of these expanding habitat management efforts statewide.

Forest habitat inventory work is a key ingredient of planning and making sound forest management decisions. Many Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources Wildlife Management Units are not owned, but simply managed by the Department.

As inventories are completed, management plans are developed and project



These oak seedlings on the Clay WMA, marked with flagging, would have little chance to develop into canopy trees while shaded by cedar trees.

should begin in 2012. These cedar harvests are intended to create young forest habitat and provide an opportunity for the abundant oak seedlings in the understory to gain a competitive growth advantage by providing them with more sunlight. Hardwoods were not removed. The Fisheries Division has used some of the resulting cedar tops for building fish

approvals sought internally as well as from other cooperating agencies as appropriate.

A 22-acre eastern red cedar harvest at the Clay WMA was completed in 2011, and a 58-acre eastern red cedar harvest

attractors in regional lakes.

A 51-acre timber harvest at the Fleming WMA is nearing completion.

See "Forest," page 8

Young forest habitat will result from this timber harvest on the Fleming WMA.



Young vigorous alder stands provide important daytime habitat for woodcock and other wildlife which prefer young forest habitat.



Recently cut alder stands on the Yatesville Lake WMA provide important night time roosting and courtship habitat for woodcock.



“Forest,” continued

The forest stands in this case are dominated by yellow poplar, some of which was impacted by past severe weather events. The objective in this case was to regenerate these forest stands and create important young forest habitat in the process.

The Department has been implementing an alder management plan on the Yatesville Lake WMA, in Lawrence County, since 2004.

Approximately 70-acres of alder in bottomland areas are being cut rotationally to keep those stands healthy and at a stage where they will be most attractive to species such as American woodcock. Soft mast producers, such as silky dogwood, are sometimes planted to supplement existing soft mast species as cut sections grow back.

A critical consideration in making proper forest management decisions is assessing what is currently present and what can be expected to replace the existing forest should management be implemented. Often considerable work must be done prior to a timber harvest to ensure conditions are right to regenerate a forest stand with favorable conditions for wildlife, rather than conditions which are less than desirable.

On the Paintsville Lake WMA, 252 acres of midstory maple removal has been implemented in an effort to enhance conditions for developing young oaks which increases the likelihood that oaks will remain a significant component of the future forest canopy there.

We have also created 34 acres of young forest habitat with small patch cuts, implemented crop tree release on about 19 acres, and feathered about four acres of forest edges on the Paintsville Lake WMA, all in an effort to maintain forest habitat diversity.

Student volunteers from Hocking Technical College recently helped plant about 1,200 fruit/mast producing shrubs in a small patch cut on the Paintsville Lake WMA.

See “Forest,” page 9



Biologist Harley Weaver treats a midstory maple with herbicide on the Paintsville Lake WMA to encourage more favorable growing conditions for young understory oak seedlings.



Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources employees begin the difficult task of kudzu eradication at the Fishtrap Lake WMA.

“Forest,” continued

The need for the control of invasive exotic species has unfortunately become a management reality on open land as well as forest land everywhere.

A key to managing invasive exotics is to tackle problem areas aggressively and remain vigilant to potential developing problems. We cannot afford to allow these invasive exotics to displace our native vegetation and reduce the natural biological diversity of these Wildlife Management Areas.

The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources is also pursuing a variety of forest restoration projects. Forest restoration projects under the auspices of the Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative have recently been implemented on reclaimed surface mine areas within the Yatesville Lake and Fishtrap Lake WMAs. These surface mine sites, traditionally very difficult to successfully grow trees on because of compaction problems,

have been ripped by dozers to reduce mine spoil compaction, sprayed to control exotic invasive plants, and replanted to trees and shrubs.

If successful, these tree and shrub plantings will help restore these mine spoils to valuable forest habitat someday while providing important habitat for wildlife such as ruffed grouse, elk, black bear, and a wide variety of songbirds, perhaps even the imperiled golden-winged warbler.

Forest habitat management for wildlife is no longer wishful thinking on the part of the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources. While there remains much work to do, significant progress has been made and the wildlife habitat on our Wildlife Management Areas will be better for it.

Right: University student volunteers plant tree and shrub seedlings on a Fishtrap Lake WMA mine site. Forest restoration is the long-term goal.



Conservation officer's own loss motivates his assistance to tornado victims

Patrick Younts knows what it's like to be left homeless by a disaster. So when the five-year Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources conservation officer learned of houses leveled by a tornado in West Liberty last Friday, he spearheaded a personal campaign to provide desperately needed supplies to the victims.

"I was sitting at the table with my wife that night, and I said, 'What can we do?' So I called Bart Patton at the Booneville Shopwise grocery store," said Younts, a Booneville resident. "He agreed to match me for every dollar that I raised."

Younts was a man with a mission. He called co-workers. He called friends. He stopped by every house on the way to Patton's store to ask people to help. "I raised about \$800 in 30 minutes," Younts said enough to fill his pickup truck with des-



perately needed canned goods and bottled water for the tornado victims.

Lt. Jim Harrison, Sixth District law enforcement commander for Kentucky Fish and Wildlife, said Younts had a personal motivation to help. "Patrick lost his home to a fire about two years ago," Harrison said. "He was on his way back from working at Herrington Lake

when his wife called and told him that their house had burned to the ground. His wife and son were safe, but they just lost everything."

Younts' community and co-workers responded with an outpouring of support. The officer never forgot their compassion and generosity.

"When I lost my house, it humbled me," Younts said. "I'm giving back because people came and helped me. I decided that

I would give back to the people who need it the most."

Younts said the destruction in West Liberty stunned him. "I've never seen anything like it in my life," he said. "What you see on TV doesn't do any justice to the amount of damage there. I saw people crying when they visited their house where everything was destroyed. It was like the buildings were made out of newspaper and they just got shredded."

Younts helped victims recover items from the remains of their houses, including some much-needed medical oxygen tanks.

"I know what it's like to lose everything," Younts said. "One day you're in your house and the next day it's gone."

The officer is still raising funds to put together personal kits for victims: sanitizer, blankets, diapers, toiletries, toothpaste and other supplies. He wants to assemble 30-40 kits to help those in need.

Younts said his motivation is simple. "I'm not doing anything that anyone else wouldn't do," he said.

KDFWR Academy Class 17B

KDFWR Law Enforcement Academy Class 17B officially got underway March 1. Let's take a moment to briefly get to know the recruits that make up this latest academy class.

Recruit **Thomas Blackwell** served as a Conservation Education Program Leader (CEPL) with the Information and Education Division. He graduated from ECU in 2007 with a bachelor's degree in wildlife management. He is married and is assigned to Meade County.

Jeffrey Hall will be reporting to Breckinridge County. Hall comes from the

United States Air National Guard.

Matthew Hartley will be assigned to Grant County. Hartley is married and is a United States Air Force veteran.

Assigned to Estill County is recruit **Danica Hebert**. Hebert earned her bachelor's degree from ECU in 2007, and then joined the United States Coast Guard from 2008-2010.

Recruit **Jennifer Henning** is assigned to Ohio County. She holds an Associate's Degree in applied science, and is married with two children.

Heading to Russell County is **Mat-**

thew Parmley. Parmley is a United States Marine Corps veteran. He is married and has two boys.

Reporting to Wolfe County is former teacher, recruit **Joshua Robinson**. Robinson is also married.

Recruit **Jacob Shepherd** is assigned to Magoffin County. Shepherd has a Bachelor's Degree in criminal justice and is married.

Recruit **Joshua Wheat** attended Western Kentucky University. He is married and will be assigned to work Butler County.

Biologists assist West Virginia with immobilization of an escaped elk

On February 9, Elk Biologist **Dan Crank** and Bear Biologist **Jayson Plaxico** headed north to West Virginia to assist the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources (WVDNR) in capturing a rogue bull elk in Marshall County.

The elk had escaped from a captive elk farm near Aleppo, PA over a year ago and turned up in the northern panhandle of West Virginia last fall.

WVDNR had planned on euthanizing the elk, but public outcry (including a stay of execution ordered by the WV Governor and a Save the Pleasant Valley Elk Facebook page) caused them to find other means of removing the animal.

WVDNR does not have access to the drug Carfentanil, so they requested our help. A local resident had been feeding the bull since December and allowed access to his property only after he was told the animal was going to be darted and moved. Dan and Jayson arrived on the scene and in just under an hour the bull was tranquilized and loaded in a trailer. He was

moved to French Creek Wildlife Center where he currently resides.

The following letter was received from Curtis Taylor, Chief of the Wildlife Resources Section, West Virginia Division of Natural Resources. "On behalf of the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Section, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to you and your staff for providing assistance in the immobilization and transport of an elk that had escaped from a captive cervid facility in Pennsylvania and wandered over to West Virginia. In particular, I would like to recognize two members of your staff, Dan Crank and Jayson Plaxico, for their outstanding professionalism, technical skills, and diplomacy. With their able assistance, we successfully resolved a sensi-

tive and contentious issue in a professional and responsible manner. Their expertise and knowledge, pertaining to the handling and immobilization of this elk, were invaluable in bringing this potentially volatile situation to a successful conclusion.

You can certainly be proud of the work Dan and Jayson provided for our agency. If we can ever return the favor and provide the KDFWR with assistance, please contact me."



View from the east levee of middle compartment, looking across the middle compartment water control structures (armored by rip-rap). Ducks are flushing from south compartment, Feb. 2012.



Doug Travis WMA WRP impoundments

Construction was completed on a Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) project on the Milner Tract of Doug Travis Wildlife Management Area (DTWMA) in late October of 2011.

The project, as designed by NRCS engineers, consists of three compartments in a “tiered” design to maximize shallow-water pool area. When full, there will be a total of 30 acres of surface water in the impoundments.

Our contractor moved just under 11,000 cubic yards of dirt to build the levees, and installed five Agri-drain structures (one to drain each compartment and two more to transfer water between compartments). The NRCS is reimbursing KDFWR approximately 75 percent of construction costs, and Ducks Unlimited has contributed funds towards the remaining cost.

One month after construction, backwater from the Mississippi River covered the impoundment - levees and all - for several days. We were concerned that the freshly seeded levees would sustain some damage from the water going in and out, but they

survived in good condition (the wheat and grass that was seeded even stayed alive).

Upon the advice of our contractor, we had installed only enough boards in the structures to hold at one-third of full water capacity. Since our fill had been borrowed from inside two of the compartments, we assumed that ducks wouldn't utilize the flooded bare mud in any appreciable numbers this spring.

Since December, parts or all of the three levees have been covered by backwater at least two more times, but they are

still in good condition. We are now finding ducks, up to 500 at times, utilizing the shallow water and muddy ground in what moist-soil vegetation was not disturbed during the construction, despite the fact that the entire site was mowed late last summer to allow surveying activities.

We have seen mallards, wood ducks, pintails, green-winged teal, gadwalls, American wigeon, and Canada geese using the impoundments. Plans are to manage these impoundments for moist-soil vegetation in the future.



Ducks using compartment 3 on February 14.

Voluntary Public Access Cooperative Dove Fields

February and March are the months to submit applications for KDFWR's cooperative dove field program. This year marks the second year in which the program will be able to offer expanded benefits for landowners under the Voluntary Public Access (VPA) program.

The VPA program is possible through a USDA grant specifically geared to public outdoor opportunities on private lands. The Wildlife Division's existing Cooperative Dove Field Program ideally fit into this practice and the program was expanded under the grant.

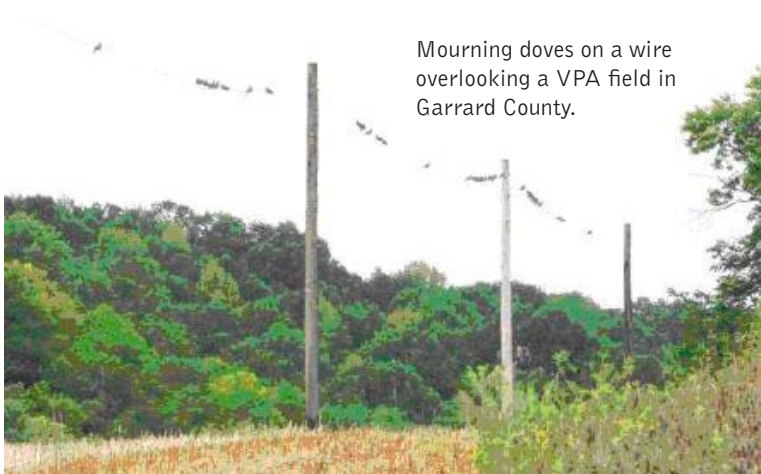
KDFWR's Cooperative Dove Field Program has been around since 1996 and has funded the establishment of 12 – 14 fields annually. However, over the last few years because of rising fuel and commodity prices landowner interest in the program has declined.

In 2011, in an effort to increase landowner interest the Wildlife Division increased the number of acres eligible for enrollment, and total payment was raised to \$10,000. The program change accomplished its goal and landowner interest increased nearly five-fold from 2010.

In 2011, there were 28 private fields funded by



A VPA dove field in Mercer County.



Mourning doves on a wire overlooking a VPA field in Garrard County.



Mentor dove hunt on VPA field in Green County.

VPA dollars. The private/public cooperative dove fields were scattered across the Commonwealth with many within a short drive of major urban areas. In 2011, the number of VPA fields more than doubled the number of private fields available in 2010.

Wildlife Division staff estimated these fields were used by about 1,000 hunters who harvested nearly 4,000 doves the first day of dove season. These fields continued to receive extensive use during the first few weeks of the season and occasional use thereafter through agreement's end, October 24.

The initial VPA grant has enough funding to maintain current levels for three years with additional years dependent upon continuing USDA funding if permitted under the new farm bill.

Currently, it appears that this is unlikely given federal efforts to reduce the budget deficit. The Wildlife Division plans to fund a similar number of fields in 2012 as in 2011 and 2013 if sufficient funds remain.

The VPA program has proved there is opportunity to increase public access to private lands for recreational use through cooperative programs that are beneficial to both the landowner and KDFWR.

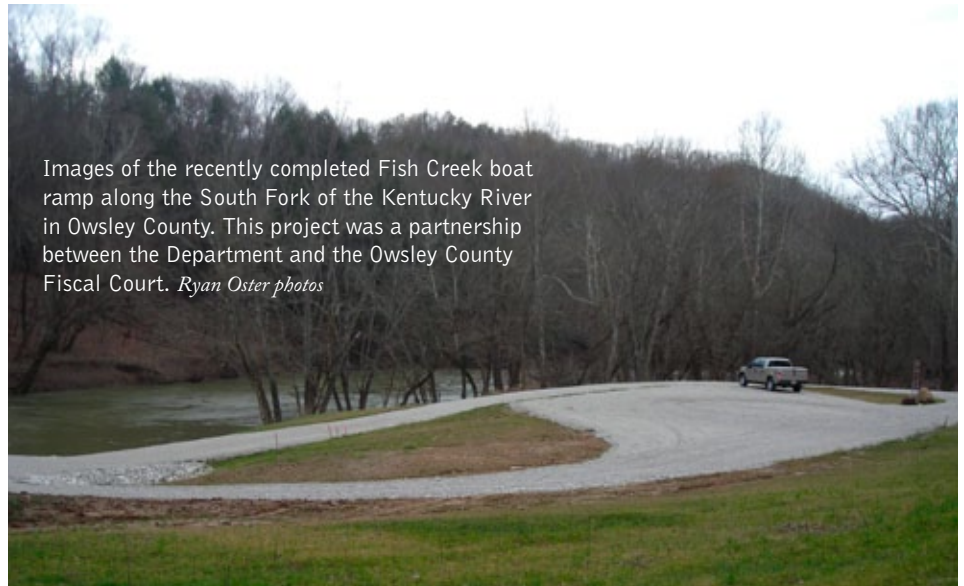


Engineering completes new boat ramp on South Fork of Kentucky River

Staff from the Engineering Division are pleased to announce that they have completed construction of a new boat ramp (Fish Creek boat ramp) and parking area along the South Fork of the Kentucky River. The new access site is located just to the north of Booneville (Owsley County).

Anglers and boaters can access the site by taking Hwy 30 north out of Booneville. Immediately after crossing the South Fork of the Kentucky River, turn left onto Fish Creek Road. The boat ramp is approximately two miles on your left.

This new boat ramp will provide anglers, boaters, and canoe/kayaks access for fishing and scenic viewing along this stretch of the South Fork. The boat ramp is comprised of a paved, single lane ramp and gravel parking to accommodate as many as 10 vehicles and trailers. This project was a partnership between the Department and the Owsley County Fiscal Court. General maintenance of the site is being provided by the Owsley County



Images of the recently completed Fish Creek boat ramp along the South Fork of the Kentucky River in Owsley County. This project was a partnership between the Department and the Owsley County Fiscal Court. *Ryan Oster photos*



Fiscal Court.

The Engineering Division is also constructing another small boat access site (Hacker Branch boat ramp) just to the south of the small town of Southfork, also on the South Fork of the Kentucky River. While this site is still under construction, once completed, this site will develop a challenging small boat and canoe/kayak access "put-in" site along the South Fork.

Canoes and kayaks would then float downstream approximately 13.5 miles and utilize the Fish Creek boat ramp as the "take-out" site.

These two projects continue to highlight the work that the Engineering Division is doing to improve recreational boating and fishing access throughout the Commonwealth.



Large, exposed flat in the Dog Creek arm before and after the recent fish habitat improvement at Nolin River Lake. *Rob Rold photos*

Nolin River Lake gets fish habitat

A recent partnership between the Fisheries Division, Wildlife Division, and Nolin River Lake Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) resulted in a massive deployment of fish habitat, similar to that reported at Green River Lake in early February.

This group effort involved 15 to 18 people daily from various sections within the Department, the Nolin ACOE, and one volunteer. Crews assembled and worked around the Dog Creek Campground on February 21 and around the Iberia Boat Ramp on February 22. The goal of the project was to add substantial shoreline habitat in two arms of the lake otherwise lacking necessary feeding, spawning, and refuge areas for fish.

Many ACOE flood control reservoirs in Kentucky are subject to large winter draw-downs in preparation for winter/spring rains. Annually, the lake elevation at Nolin River Lake is reduced 25 feet to create this flood storage capacity. This draw-down exposes much of the lake basin, along with any form of fish habitat for a period as long as possibly five months. This once submerged woody material degrades much more rapidly when exposed to air, as opposed to always remaining submerged.

Over time, much of the initial woody fish habitat present in Nolin River Lake has degraded and many parts of the lake are actually devoid of such habitat. Presently, the majority of woody habitat that remains in Nolin River Lake is comprised of deep standing timber that remains submerged despite the 25-foot winter

draw-down.

In an attempt to increase woody habitat that is beneficial to fish populations, fish attractors were constructed from wooden pallets and Christmas trees. Various pallet designs were utilized and

See “Nolin,” page 16



Wooden pallets and Christmas trees placed adjacent to the existing Rock Creek channel at the Iberia boat ramp. Note the presence of the Hwy 88 bridge. *Rob Rold photo*

"Nolin," continued

Christmas trees were added either to the tops, sides, or inside of constructed attractors. Making use of unseasonably good weather, the hard working crews deployed 950 pallets, 383 Christmas trees, and five large cedar trees.

This effort resulted in a total of 388 new fish attractors constructed in four locations in only two days. The attractors were placed 6-20 feet deep at summer pool elevation to facilitate fishing for multiple fish species throughout the year. These structures should congregate fish resulting

in an increased angler catch rate as well as provide feeding opportunities for various fish species. GPS locations for these sites are available on the KDFWR website under "State Lakes with Fish Attractors".

We need to express our thanks to the businesses that either graciously donated or sold materials to us at cost for this project. Wooden pallets used at Nolin were donated by River Valley Animal Feeds (Tyson Foods Inc, Sebree, KY), Best Made Pallets, LLC (Shepherdsville, KY), and Kentucky Correctional Industries (Frankfort, KY). The Lowe's of Madisonville provided 2x4 wood sections at a reduced

price, while concrete block was sold to us at cost by Lee Brick and Block (Owensboro, KY). The Fisheries Division would also like to thank staff from the Wildlife Division and the Nolin River Lake ACOE for their assistance with this project.

This was another project aimed at enhancing fish habitat and angler success and satisfaction throughout the Commonwealth. A similar project will be conducted at Rough River Lake in early 2013.

For more information on this project or upcoming projects please contact Joseph Zimmerman in the Environmental Section at 502-564-3400 extension 4473.

"The Highest Honor bestowed.....The Medal of Honor"



In early June of 2011, Brigadier General Julius "Bud" Berthold asked the Department to be a part of the 150th Anniversary of the Congressional Medal of Honor Society (CMOHS) Celebration being hosted in Louisville, KY.

We responded in the typical Fish and Wildlife way with the Medal of Honor Fishing event, hosted by KDFWR and John "Papa John" Schnatter Farms. Several folks came together and put together a first class event for 10 Medal of Honor recipients and CMOHS Staff.

On September 29, 2011, "Papa John" gave us the venue at his farm in Simpsonville. The Engineering Divi-



Dave Baker photo

sion figured out how to get the boats in the water on his three lakes, and several staff members donated their skills and equipment to make this day one of the most memorable in recent history for the Recipients.

Safety briefings were given, wagers were placed, and fun was had by all. Staff members, retired and current, prepared a feast of fresh fish and all the trimmings, and comments were made that the "down home" appeal was greatly appreciated. It was our goal to thank the Recipients for

their sacrifice and devotion to all of us, and our Country. The event was a resounding success.

During the March Commission Dinner, the Congressional Medal of Honor Society rewarded KDFWR with certificates and commemorative coins for our involvement in their special day.

For all of us, being in the presence of these living legends, and sharing a day of fun and the outdoors was reward enough. We were blessed to be a part of such a wonderful day.

Calloway County High School Bass Club aids Fisheries with habitat development

Members of the Calloway County High School Laker Bass Fishing Club recently volunteered their time to assist staff in the Western Fisheries District in constructing and placing fish habitat structures in Kentucky Lake.

As part of their club's community service, members aided Fisheries staff in placing Christmas trees and wooden pallets in the Blood River embayment at Kentucky Lake. Club members included Dillon Starks, Reid Finley, Morgan Hays, and Bracken Robertson.

In total, the club helped place 82 trees on the exposed mud flats near Wildcat Boat Ramp. Once Kentucky Lake reaches summer pool elevation, these trees will have approximately five feet of water over them, providing habitat for crappie, large-mouth bass, bluegill, redear, and catfish.

Additionally, wooden pallets were constructed in a triangular design and sunken with concrete blocks near a deep water fish attractor buoy, also in Blood River. In total, 51 wooden pallets were placed as part of the fish attractor.

Staff from the Western Fisheries District appreciated their hard work and dedication. This is another example of the many partnerships that the agency has developed to help implement fish and wildlife habitat improvement throughout the Commonwealth.



Members of the Calloway County High School Laker Bass Fishing Club helped create fish habitat at Kentucky Lake using Christmas trees and wooden pallets. *Paul Rister photos*



National Field Archery Association's Championship



Michala Frederick, Anderson County High School, daughter of Wildlife Biologist **Dave Frederick** and his wife Melanie, took first place in the Youth Female Freestyle Division (12-14 years old) in the State Indoor Championship National Field Archery Championship February 25-26.

This is one of the National Field Archery Association's state championship series and a perfect score would be 300. Michala scored a 294 with 28 x-ring hits and received the Jake & Vi Thompson Award for High Overall Youth Female Shooter.

She is also a member of the Anderson County High School's NASP team (National Archery in the Schools).

Michala Frederick with her trophy.
Dave Frederick photo

Admin Corner: A reminder and updates for sportsmen and women

The new license year started on March 1, with licenses and permits available on our website fw.ky.gov, over the phone at 1-877-KYTAG-01 (877-598-2401), or at over 800 license agents throughout Kentucky. In addition to the annual licenses and permits, 2012 Elk Lottery chances are also available on our website and can be purchased until midnight, April 30.


Kentucky is becoming known to many as the "Land of 10,000 Elk." Due to the excellent health of the herd, the number of Elk tags for 2012 was increased to 900. That's 100 more than last season, which means better odds that you'll get drawn. But remember, you must enter at fw.ky.gov to be drawn. It's only \$10 to apply but now

you can enhance your chances by picking two for only \$20.

The Administrative Services Licensing and Information Technology branches work daily with many different employees from multiple divisions to strive toward providing the best customer service possible. This commitment is obviously key to ensuring that we retain our current customers and recruit new sportsmen and women for the future, and none of this would be possible without fish and wildlife employees everywhere advancing the department's mission and promoting the services we have to offer.

As examples of our commitment to customer service, we want to remind

ENTER TO WIN





KENTUCKY LAKE SPRING MADNESS
FISHING PACKAGE

TO ENTER GO TO OUR FACEBOOK PAGE
facebook.com/KDFWR
or
scan the QR code with your smartphone

PACKAGE INCLUDES:
2 NIGHT STAY
AT KENTUCKY
DAM VILLAGE STATE PARK
(DOUBLE OCCUPANCY)

2 DAY GUIDED FISHING TRIP
ON KENTUCKY
LAKE AND A FISHING GEAR PACKAGE
(INCLUDES RODS, REELS, & TACKLE)





parks.ky.gov

Visit our Facebook page and register to win a fishing trip for two on Kentucky Lake!

Prize package includes a two-night stay at Kentucky Dam Village State Park Lodge, two days of fishing guide service, rods/reels and tackle.

Register by clicking here:
<http://woobox.com/266wpix>.

Also, receive an extra entry for each friend you "share" this contest with on Facebook!

Please distribute this message to all your contacts. Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife and Kentucky State Parks employees and immediate family are not eligible to win. Fishing licenses required and are not included in prize package.

everyone that both licenses and hunter education cards can be reprinted for free from our website and Telecheck is now available online and/or by mobile device. Later this year, Administrative Services, with the help from other divisions, hopes to deliver at least two new online features: 1) Allowing you to download important hunting and fishing dates to your Outlook calendar and mobile device and 2) Offering license and permit gift certificates you can purchase for your friends and family.

Stay tuned for more news and updates from the Administrative Services Division in future newsletters.

Sixth District Conservation Officers select their Sportsman of the Year

By Sgt. Phillip Crane

Sixth District Conservation Officers have selected Kenny Nash of Anderson County as their 2011 District Sportsman of the Year.

Nash, who owns and resides on his 130-acre farm with his family, is a 38-year resident of the county.

Sixth District Conservation Officers represent 17 central Kentucky counties and select a sportsman or sportswoman each year that stands out during the year. They recognize a landowner involved in outdoor events, who also purchases hunting and fishing licenses annually, and who assists district Conservation Officers in any way. They seek to award someone that goes above the norm to be an outstanding sportsman or woman. All Officers in the district agreed that we should give back to our sportsmen, and this is a small token of our appreciation for what they do for us.

The officers praise Nash as a model citizen when it comes to anything involving the outdoors. Nash purchased a hunting license every year despite being a landowner. He has been active with the National Wild Turkey Federation and its local chapter for many years, volunteering for any and everything they need assistance with. His focus is on youth involvement, and he served as NWTF J.A.K.E.S. Director for several years. He held the JAKES Day event on his farm in Anderson County on multiple occasions.

When I transferred back to my home county, Kenny was the first contact I made to see if he would be interested in assisting with some county youth deer and turkey hunts. He was so excited to be part of something like this, he volunteered funds, his property, his gun, and himself for such events.

During the 2011 seasons, Nash participated as a guide for the youth spring



Left to right: Jason Wells, Phillip Crane, Kenny Nash, David Goodlett and Gabe Welch.

turkey hunt and the youth deer hunt. He was successful as well, as each of the youth that he escorted harvested either a turkey or deer. He took every measure to make sure the youth had the best experience possible. He also was a great help in organizing these events.

Kenny has most definitely been an asset, and a good friend to the local CO's, and to his county. He is an upbeat and outstanding person to know. And through the efforts he gave in 2011 for our youth, he deserves a pat on the back from his local Conservation Officers.

KDFWR's Research Program launches web page

KDFWR's Research Program launched a web page to better facilitate communication within the agency, with our partners, and with the public.

The web page includes the mission statement of the Research Program, links to archived Research Highlights Documents (2007-2010), and information regarding a new application process for research/surveys on public lands and caves. University contacts statewide have received a letter informing them of this new process.

The brief application process aims to

increase communication between KDFWR and partners, and will ensure that KDFWR management activities do not inadvertently disturb/disrupt teaching and research projects on public lands.

The Research Program welcomes the opportunity to assist academic institutions and our partners in selecting appropriate teaching and research sites on public lands, and this system is a step towards better collaboration.

Check out the Research Program web page here: <http://fw.ky.gov/navigation.aspx?cid=1004&navpath=C741>



Ballard Greenwing event 2012



The annual Greenwing event was held at Ballard again this year with 100 kids in attendance.

All of the **Ballard staff** was in attendance along with Conservation Officers **Tony Dunker, Sgt. Garry Clark, Kyle Webb** and **Lt. Chad Parker**.

Weather and waterfowl did not cooperate for banding activities, but the youth enjoyed the drawing for duck calls, Ducks Unlimited placards, a BB gun, a .410 shotgun and a few other items.

Other events included shooting shotguns at clay targets, shooting BB guns and letting a few arrows loose at archery targets.

Several local banks assisted with providing lunch for everyone at the event too.